

**SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS**  
**KENT CONRAD, RANKING MEMBER**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 8, 2001

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**SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE RANKING MEMBER  
SAYS BUSH TAX CUT FREEZES OUT NEEDED  
EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS**  
**Conrad Applauds Bush For Strong Education Emphasis,  
But Questions Budgetary Commitment**

**Washington, DC** - Senator Kent Conrad, the Ranking Member on the Senate Budget Committee, today applauded President Bush for putting a strong emphasis on the importance of education, but faulted the President's budget for not matching resources with his public commitment. Conrad's remarks came in a Senate Budget Committee hearing with Education Secretary Roderick Paige.

"The President's tax cut is so big that it short-changes the rest of the budget, providing inadequate resources to even our nation's top priorities like education," said Conrad. "Unfortunately, the bottom line is that the President has made his tax cut a higher priority than the rest of his budget, including notably his education goals."

Conrad said not only is education being short-changed by the massive tax cut, but the Bush Administration is misleading the public by claiming to raise education spending by \$4.6 billion or 11.5% in its proposed fiscal year 2002 budget. The senior Democrat on the Senate Budget Committee said the Administration purposely excluded already approved funding in order to overstate the increase, an increase he says is only \$2.4 billion or 5.7% when adjusted for funding approved last year.

"The President's education budget doesn't even keep pace with previous increases in education funding," explained Conrad. "Over the last five years, funding for education programs has increased by an average of nearly 13 percent annually."

Conrad cited the Administration's inadequate support for elementary and secondary programs as well as the President's elimination of the school renovation program as examples of how the President's big tax cut is making it impossible to provide the necessary level of funding for vital programs that enjoy bipartisan support.

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